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April 1, 1981

Mr. Craig S. Watson
Managing Director, Rites & Reason
Box 1148
Brown University
Providence, Rhode Island 02912

Dear Mr. Watson:

Thank you very much for your recent letter in regard to the proposed 50% cut in the budgets of the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities.

I am proud of the role I have played in helping develop programs in the arts and humanities during the eleven years that I served as Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts and Humanities. The Arts and Humanities programs have had an undeniably significant impact on the quality of our national life. I am very concerned about the effect that the proposed cuts would have in curtailing the highly successful Federal involvement with our nation's scholars, artists and cultural institutions.

I recognize this as a time of belt-tightening as our economic situation is a paramount concern to all Americans. Unless inflation can be checked and the Federal deficit reduced, all citizens will suffer. The President has proposed wide cuts in almost every area of Federal spending to accomplish these objectives and I expect to support a good many of his recommended reductions.

In this period of budget restraint, however, the Arts and Humanities should not be forced to bear such an unfair share of the burden. I could not in good conscience support radical cuts that would, in my opinion, profoundly affect the quality and vitality of American life. You may be sure that I will do my best to assure that these unique and vital programs are fairly treated.

Thank you again for writing me. I appreciate knowing your views and will be sure to keep them in mind as we consider legislative action in this area.

Warm regards.

Ever sincerely,

Claiborne Pell

AC/ap